

Forest Plan Revision Issues

Wilderness

Roadless Areas

Potential Wilderness Areas

Wilderness

- Wilderness is any area of land **designated by Congress** as part of the National Wilderness Preservation System that was established in the Wilderness Act of 1964.

Wilderness

- "an area of undeveloped Federal land which:
- (1) generally appears to have been affected primarily by the forces of nature,
- (2) has outstanding opportunities for solitude or a primitive and unconfined type of recreation;

Wilderness

- (3) has at least five thousand acres of land or is of sufficient size for preservation; and
- (4) may contain features of scientific, educational, scenic, or historical value."

Roadless Areas

- Roadless Area Review and Evaluation in 1972
- Those areas that meet the definition of wilderness and are evaluated during plan revision for possible recommendation to Congress

Roadless Areas

- Eastern Wilderness Act 1975
- Definition of "roadless" in the eastern U.S. allows up to 0.5 miles of road per 1,000 acres of an area (2.5 miles of road for a 5,000 acre area)

Roadless Areas

- Roadless Area Review and Evaluation in 1978 (RARE II)
- Forest Planning required review of roadless areas

Roadless Areas

2001 Roadless Rule

- Identified Inventoried Roadless Areas
- Recognized additional benefits of roadless areas
- Established prohibitions on road construction and timber harvest

Roadless Areas

2001 Roadless Rule

- Current status is in flux

Potential Wilderness Areas

- Those areas that meet the definition of wilderness and are evaluated during plan revision for possible recommendation to Congress
- Same definition as roadless areas, but new term is in the new planning regulations

George Washington NF Wilderness, Roadless and Potential Wilderness

- 1975 Eastern Wilderness Act – Ramseys Draft Wilderness Study Area
- 1979 RARE II identified 14 areas with 168,000 acres
- 1984 Congress designated St. Mary's and Ramseys Draft Wilderness
- 1988 Congress designated Rough Mountain and Rich Hole Wilderness

George Washington NF Wilderness, Roadless and Potential Wilderness

- 1993 roadless inventory for GW Plan identified 27 areas with 261,000 acres
 - Became Inventoried Roadless Areas for 2001 Roadless Rule
- 1994 Congress designated Mt. Pleasant National Scenic Area (7,700 acres)
- 2000 Congress designated The Priest and The Three Ridges Wilderness (10,000 acres)

George Washington NF Wilderness, Roadless and Potential Wilderness

- 2008 identified 37 areas with 370,000 acres as Potential Wilderness Areas for the Plan Revision

George Washington NF Wilderness, Roadless and Potential Wilderness

Year	Potential Wilderness	Wilderness	National Scenic Areas
1979	168,000 Ac		
1988	136,000 Ac	32,000 Ac	
1993	261,000 Ac	32,000 Ac	
2000	241,000 Ac	42,000 Ac	7,700 Ac
2008	370,000 Ac	42,000 Ac	7,700 Ac

George Washington NF and Potential Wilderness

How are these areas currently being managed?

241,000 acres were under the Roadless Rule

60% of the areas have at least a core that is managed as a Special Management Area or as Remote Highlands/Backcountry Recreation

40% of the areas are in areas managed for wildlife or timber

Many of the areas have a core of remote management, but allow wildlife management along the boundary roads

George Washington NF and Wilderness Process

1. Wilderness review starts by identifying all the potential wilderness areas (formerly referred to as roadless areas) that meet the definition of wilderness.
2. These areas are then evaluated for their capability to be managed as wilderness, their availability in relation to their need to provide other resources, and their need to be included in the wilderness system.
3. After reviewing the evaluations, the agency has the opportunity to recommend areas to Congress for designation as wilderness.
4. Only Congress has the authority to designate wilderness.

National Scenic Areas

National Scenic Areas. Areas that contain outstanding scenic characteristics, recreational values, and geologic, ecologic, and cultural resources.

There are no standard measures that describe what can and cannot be done in a NSA. This is described in the designation or in a study required by the law.

Frequently Asked Questions

•*Most types of recreational uses are allowed in Wilderness, except those needing mechanical transport or motorized equipment.*

•*Fire Use in Wilderness*

Objectives for This Meeting

•Discuss management of the Potential Wilderness Areas and the two Inventoried Roadless Areas not part of the current inventory

Objectives for This Meeting

- 1. What are the characteristics that make this area a good wilderness?
- 2. What are the resource uses that might be foregone if this area became wilderness?
- 3. If not wilderness, how would you like to see this area managed?

Objectives for This Meeting

- As at the last meetings you will be hosted by the District Ranger or one of their assistants or one of our Staff Officers. They will lead the discussion.
- In addition to your answers to how you would like to see areas managed, we would also like to hear options for addressing conflicting desires.

Objectives for This Meeting

- In your groups you can discuss your long term desired condition for the area, guidelines that you would like to see used in managing the area and objectives for uses that you would like to see in the area.

Visit Our Website

www.fs.fed.us/r8/gwj

- Posted information will include:
 - Plan Revision schedule
 - Notices of upcoming meetings
 - Summaries of past meetings
 - Draft Documents
 - Contact information